

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'
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“The revealed word of God is the truth, and can be proved by each individual for himself. To obtain such truth, one must live in harmony with the principles of truth as contained in the teachings of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.”—DAVID A. SMITH.

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THE WITNESSES TO THE BOOK OF MORMON

ELDER OSCAR W. McCONKIE

THE Master's words to Pilate, as recorded in the eighteenth chapter of St. John were: To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice."

Thus it is apparent that by divine election the Son of God, in whose mouth is the law of truth, and in whom is the Way, became truth's chief witness and advocate. His divine plan contemplates the revelation of all of God's purposes that relate to the peoples of the earth. And no part of that plan is without witness. God's witnesses plainly acquaint earthly mortals, so far as it concerns them, with unmistakable evidences of the truth of all that God proposes. These evidences are made plain, free from technical entanglements, and unconcealed by hedges of rigid or unyielding formality. The Lord searches the inward soul, the heart's meditations; adding unmistakable assurances where man, the object of His grace, permits. His divine methods have completely disarmed apologists of legal technicalities—those who would voice objections to the testimonies of witnesses to divine truths on technical legal grounds—and have left the race without excuse for non-acceptance.

Blackstone, an outstanding authority on English law, defined evidence as signifying "that which makes clear or ascertains the truth of the very fact or point in issue, either on one side or the other." It is all the means or species of probative matter affording proof for the purpose of inducing belief. But "that which makes clear or ascertains the truth" must be knowable—that which can be known. Two axioms underlie the whole structure of evidence; first: no facts are admissible, except those having rational probative value; and second, unless a positive rule forbids, all facts that have rational probative value are admissible. Persuasion may be induced either by human declaration that a

thing exists, or by any other fact. With this scant statement of the principles of legal evidence in mind, let us refer to evidential facts concerning the Book of Mormon to determine their probative value.

Three witnesses, divinely called, have given this testimony to the world of what they saw, heard and experienced concerning the Book of Mormon :

In this able treatise on an interesting and important phase of the evidence supporting the truth of "Mormonism," Elder Oscar W. McConkie speaks with authority. Elder McConkie is well known in Utah legal circles, and for many years has been a Judge in the Third Judicial District of Utah. *Star* readers will find interesting and faith-promoting his discussion of the Three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon; the legal status of their testimony, and its probative value; and his rendered opinion that their witness stands unimpeached before the world.—THE EDITORS.

Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this record shall come: That we, through the grace of God, the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, have seen the plates which contain this record, which is a record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites, their brethren, also of the people of Jared, who came from the tower of which hath been spoken. And we also know that they have been translated by the gift and power of God, for his voice hath declared it unto us; wherefore we know of a surety that the work is true. And we also testify that we have seen the engravings which are upon the plates; and they have been

shown unto us by the power of God, and not of man. And we declare with words of soberness, that an angel of God came down from heaven, and he brought and laid before our eyes, that we beheld and saw the plates, and the engravings thereon; and we know that it is by the grace of God, the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, that we beheld and bear record that these things are true. And it is marvellous in our eyes. Nevertheless, the voice of the Lord commanded us that we should bear record of it; wherefore, to be obedient unto the commandments of God, we bear testimony of these things. And we know that if we are faithful in Christ, we shall rid our garments of the blood of all men, and be found spotless before the judgment-seat of Christ, and shall dwell with him eternally in the heavens. And the honor be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is one God. Amen.

OLIVER COWDERY
DAVID WHITMER
MARTIN HARRIS

Important in determining the value of a testimony is the character of the witness, and the relationship he bears to the event of which he testifies and to all the circumstances surrounding it.

These men had desired to be eye-witnesses of the plates that the Angel Moroni had entrusted to the care of Joseph Smith. To that end they importuned divine Providence. At first their faith failed them. Believing himself the cause, Martin Harris separated himself from the other for further prayer. The angel showed the plates to the others and thereafter to Martin Harris also. Martin Harris was a respected, proud man. It is highly improbable that he would have lent his name to a false narration that reflected upon his worthiness. It is more likely that the precise contrary would be his course, although his honesty precludes such suggestion. Had this been a creation of their own it would hardly have included such a feature as the effect of

Martiu's evident weakness. Also, these manifestations were in day-light, in open-air, when the parties were in an attitude of thoughtful humility and prayer.

They saw the angel, the plates, and the engravings, and they heard the voice of God declare that the translation was by His gift and power, and that they were to become witnesses thereof. It was a divine record, made for divine purpose, at the direction of the Divine Being, who pursuant to His divine plan, became witness of it and of all that it contained.

NOW, that same Deity, the everlasting God, appointed Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris to witness also; to go forth unto the world, and to send their testimony unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples. They went not as ordinary witnesses but clothed with superlative majesty, directly called by the great God to be co-witnesses with Him in such proclamation.

Oliver Cowdery was less than a year younger than the Prophet. He was a school teacher and thereafter a lawyer. He was a man of wide learning, exalted morals, and high intellectual attainments. He became the second elder of the Church; a scribe to the Prophet, of whose mission he received divine evidence. He received also the Priesthood; a view of the plates of Nephi; ordained Joseph an elder. He became the Church historian; was appointed to carry the manuscript of the Book of Covenants to Zion, to Kirtland; was editor of the *Saints Messenger and Advocate*. He received ministrations of angels; beheld the Saviour in open vision, in the Kirtland temple; was the first to make public proclamation of the restored Gospel; was the recipient of divine revelations, and in many capacities bore both human and divine trust. He was even given conditional promise of power to translate, but because he "took no thought save it was to ask," he failed.

Notwithstanding past intimacy with the Prophet and the Lord's glory that had been upon him, Oliver Cowdery fell into transgression. The Prophet rebuked him for the error of his ways, and it became necessary to again and again call him to repentance. This the Prophet did publicly and in plainness, and with warning that unless repentance followed, the Church would raise its hand against him. But repentance became less constant until on April 11, 1838, charges were preferred against him, alleging, among other things, that he sought to destroy the character of President Joseph Smith, Jun., by insinuating guilt of crime, and he was excommunicated.

Under such circumstances can it be supposed that Oliver Cowdery would not have declared the truth, had his manifestations been other than genuine. Yet he never denied his testimony.

In October, 1848, eleven years after his excommunication, he returned to the Church. He died on March 3rd, 1850. On October 21st, 1848, at Kaneshville, now Council Bluffs, at a conference session, he said:

I beheld with my eyes and handled with my hands the gold plates from which it was translated. I also saw with my eyes and handled with my hands the holy interpreters. The book is true. Sidney Rigdon did not write it. Mr. Spaulding did not write it. I wrote it myself, as it fell from the lips of the Prophet,

David Whitmer, respected and prominent, was almost a year older than the Prophet. He was subject to the temptations of the day and fell into darkness at times, which called for sharp rebuke by the Prophet, with threat of loss of standing. Like Oliver Cowdery, he had gained view of the plates through earnest prayer. On April 13, 1838, at Far West, he was charged with unchristianlike conduct in neglecting to attend meetings, in not observing the Word of Wisdom, in neglecting his duties, etc., and was excommunicated.

Martin Harris was twenty-one years the Prophet's senior. He amassed large land holdings and was known as a farmer of good reputation. He was proud, self-willed, and independent. He became an aid to the Prophet; acted as his scribe; was sharply reprimanded by revelation for allowing the loss of a portion of the translated record; was reproved again and again for his folly, and finally, in 1834, charges were preferred against him. But he confessed his error, repented, and retained his fellowship. He remained behind when the saints left Kirtland, and thereafter supported James J. Strang's ecclesiastical claim, for whom, in 1846, he went to England. But his activity was not great and he soon returned to Kirtland. Like the other witnesses he steadfastly held to his testimony regarding the plates and the Book of Mormon. Finally, he became again affiliated with the Church, later moving to Smithfield, Cache County, then to Clarkston. There, on July 10th, 1875, he died, whispering a last earthly testimony of the divinity of the Book of Mormon.

These witnesses were directed by revelation to perform services that resulted in great personal sacrifice. By revelation they were rebuked, chastened, and called to repentance, with threatened penalty of divine wrath and the withdrawal of the hand of fellowship, if they failed to harken. By revelation they were called to preach; were told what to preach; what to do. They were chastened in public and in private, and their follies published to the world. But always, despite anything that was done against them, or anything that they did or felt, they were true to their testimony.

FALSEHOOD could scarcely have remained concealed under such circumstances. Apostasy and broken friendships would have uncovered it. These witnesses would hardly have been so lashed in silence. Surely, in such experiences, there is rational probative value, inducing belief. To disbelieve is to reject the record; to set at naught that which the law of evidence approves; to resort to hearsay or assumption that no law would permit court or jury to hear.

In addition to these three witnesses mentioned above, eight other men bear testimony of having seen the golden plates under the most natural conditions and circumstances. This is their affirmation:

Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come: That Joseph Smith, Jun., the translator of this work, has shown unto us the plates of which hath been spoken, which have the appearance of gold; and as many of the leaves as the said Smith has translated we did handle with our hands; and we also saw the engravings thereon, all of which has the appearance of ancient work, and of curious workmanship. And this we bear record with words

of soberness, that the said Smith has shown unto us, for we have seen and hefted, and know of a surety that the said Smith has got the plates of which we have spoken. And we give our names unto the world, to witness unto the world that which we have seen. And we lie not, God bearing witness of it.

CHRISTIAN WHITMER
 JACOB WHITMER
 PETER WHITMER, JUN.
 JOHN WHITMER

HIRAM PAGE
 JOSEPH SMITH, SEN.
 HYRUM SMITH
 SAMUEL H. SMITH

Three of these witnesses became very bitter against the Prophet and left the Church. But they all bore lasting testimony to the truthfulness of their statement.

THE chief human witness of the subject of our discussion is Joseph Smith, Jun. Paraphrased extracts from his own writings give this testimony:

. . . that a personage appeared to him, and said that he was a messenger sent from the presence of God, and that his name was Moroni; that there was a book deposited, written upon gold plates, giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent, and the source from whence they sprang; . . . that the fulness of the everlasting Gospel was contained in it, as delivered by the Saviour to the ancient inhabitants; . . . that there were two stones in silver bows—these stones, fastened to a breastplate, constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim—deposited with the plates; and the possession and use of these were what constituted “seers” in ancient or former times; and that God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book; that he was to get the plates and translate them; that they should not be shown to any person, except as he was commanded, and that if he were disobedient in this he “should be destroyed;” that he was prepared, through a course of four years before he was permitted to take them; that on the twenty-second day of September, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-seven, having gone as usual at the end of another year to the place where they were deposited, the same heavenly messenger delivered them up to him with the charge that he should be responsible for them; that if he should let them go carelessly, or through any neglect, he should be cut off; but that if he would use all his endeavours to preserve them, until he, the messenger, should call for them, they should be protected; that they remained safe in his hands until the translation was complete, when, according to arrangement, the messenger returned, to whom he delivered them up.

There is a legal presumption that witnesses speak the truth. Fraud, perjury and deceit, are not presumed against one who bears witness. On the other hand, it is presumed that honesty and truth prevail, and that all things have been fairly done, until the contrary appears. Documents themselves, found in their proper repositories, unmarked by forgery, are presumed genuine. And, so, until the contrary appears, honourable credit is due the testimony of witnesses.

The extent of that credit depends upon the honesty and sincerity of the witnesses; upon their ability to speak with accuracy and truth, which in turn depends upon their powers to observe, and upon their strength of memory to retain the matters regarding which the testimony is offered; upon their opportunity for observing; upon their number; upon whether they are corroborative elements, and whether their testimony is in harmony with human experience. Miracles, so called, like other facts, may be proved by human testimony. There is no requirement

that witnesses comprehend causes or explain phenomena in order to qualify as such. The witness testifies without explanation.

The charge of conspiracy has been made against the witnesses and translator of the Book of Mormon. But conspiracy presupposes wickedness. Conspiracy is promoted by carnal instincts. Complete accord must exist among conspirators to avoid discovery. It would be stupidity of a hazardous nature to include a large number in such a venture. To do so would open the door to detection. The searching of details involved in an act that is in fact a conspiracy will generally reveal contradictions and lead to exposure. Jealousy, ambition and mistrust make co-conspirators a constant menace to secrecy of their pact. It would be contrary to all human experience to fabricate so strange and startling a narration as that told by the Book of Mormon witnesses, without quick revelation of the errors. But wonder is further challenged by the thought of perjury and deception which bore fruit in the nature of a volume of scripture, admittedly exalted in every detail. A volume of sacred scripture could hardly be fabricated.

These men who bore witness were honorable and more than ordinarily intelligent. They well knew that ridicule and persecution would follow their testimony; that they, by their stand, faced loss of property and position; that such vouching carried with it a testimony of the contents of the Book of Mormon, even to the minutest detail of the social, economic, and religious ramifications of nations; that both internal and external search would follow by an enlightened world; that its harmony with the Bible, or the lack of it, must thereafter be determined, and that if their testimony were false they were, inevitably, leaving to their posterity a legacy of falsehood and reproach. What normal human being would hazard so great a risk, except that God were with him?

THE ancient scriptures amply corroborate the witnesses of the Book of Mormon. The Lord said unto Enoch, "As I live, even so I will come in the last days. . . . And righteousness will I send down out of heaven; and truth will I send forth out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten." David, as did Isaiah, looked forward to the day when Truth would "spring out of the earth." The Lord said unto Ezekiel, "son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions; then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions; and join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in his hand." And Ezekiel beheld "the stick of Joseph" come forth through the power of God. Many other biblical references give similar support.

Technical statutes of fraud written to prevent fraud have required three and four witnesses in case of any transactions dealing with lands. Ancient common law, to prevent fraud, required that a munepative or oral will should be witnessed by three, one of whom was especially designated to bear special witness. In the case of the Book of Mormon, not three or four witnesses were called, but twelve. And not only one was especially designated to bear special witness; the Lord called three, thus disarming technical legal objection on that point. Also, at early common law twelve

jurors, men who knew most about the facts (they were really witnesses) were called, who went aside and without the aid of court or attorneys, decided. Their finding was a judgment in the case. They were called because they knew most about the parties and the cause. So it was with the plates. The twelve who knew the facts gave to the world their witness and judgment. That witness and judgment stand against the world, and everyone that is of the truth may know whether it is of God or of man.

WHETHER these facts are "knowable" has caused stumbling; but, compared with Biblical miracles these facts are most certainly not difficult to believe. Human experience, since the first man, has been fraught with such happenings, as sacred writers affirm. Indeed, records of the creation, the flood, the bondage and delivery of Israel, the Christ child, the resurrection, the experiences of prophets and patriarchs, the revelations of the Jewish scriptures, old and new, are pregnant with miracles quite as strange and wonderful.

The application of legal tests requires belief in the testimony of these witnesses, because there are no rules of evidence that exclude the facts regarding which they testify, and all of which have rational probative value; the witnesses were honest and sincere, of high honour and of more than average intelligence; they were eye witnesses, and saw and heard these glorious things in the day time; their testimony has never been impeached; their testimonies fully corroborated each other; the ancient scriptures amply corroborate their testimony; the facts are knowable; they conform to human experience, and are in full harmony with God's dealings with other nations; there was no carnal motive; the legal presumption of truthfulness is without just suspicion; they suffered ridicule and social and financial losses, because of their testimony, yet were steadfast; the corroborating record, the Book of Mormon, surpasses the ability of man to produce; their evidence conformed to the most exacting rules; broken friendships, jealousy and ambition would have uncovered any existing defect; unbiassed reflection excludes collusion or any evil purpose.

Righteousness is not wrought for evil design. These men bore witness unto the truth, as the evidence makes clear. The voice of God declared the translation to be true, of which they testify. Years of sorrow and reflection induced no change in that testimony. They agreed in all details, upon which they could not have previously conferred. Reflection makes it apparent that adverse critics of their testimony are given more to levity than to sound legal reasoning.

To these testimonies, which are but a small part of the evidential facts related to the Book of Mormon, add also more than a million other solemn testimonies of sober minded persons living and dead, and the hold of the Book of Mormon upon the hearts of men may be dimly visualized. As a humble member of that great throng, one who possesses, in small measure, a living assurance of the divine purposes of God in establishing this work through the instrumentality of Joseph Smith, my testimony—a delight, and the bread of life to me, I bear also unto you, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.—(Adapted from an address delivered Sunday, January 10th, in the Tabernacle at Salt Lake City, Utah, U.S.A.)

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1934

EDITORIAL

DISTRICT AND BRANCH SOCIALS

FRIDAY evening, January 26th, a very successful "Gold and Green ball" took place in Athenaeum Hall, London, under the auspices of the M. I. A. of the London District. This event was the first of its kind for the district, we are informed. Further, on the evening of January 31st a very enjoyable "Gold and Green" social—no dancing on the program—was held in the St. Albans Branch of the London District. And, happily, events similar to these two have taken, or are taking, place in other branches and districts. We say "happily" because events such as these are encouraged by the Church, provided, of course, they are conducted according to Church standards—in a clean, wholesome, and refined atmosphere.

"Man is that he might have joy" is a doctrine characteristic of the Church. And wholesome activities that minister to man's development as a social being are part of a satisfactory religious life. They contribute to the joy of living. They are necessary to the normal person's symmetrical growth, physically, mentally and spiritually; also to the maintenance of mental and moral equilibrium. Activities of this type bring people into group action, make them acquainted with one another, develop friendships and strengthen the spirit of brotherhood. Hence they administer to individual needs and contribute to the development of unity of purpose and action in the group as a whole. They are therefore a very effective means of strengthening and building branches of the Church. Wherever feasible, then, branch and district offices should give every encouragement to social gatherings under Church auspices, such as "Gold and Green" parties, either with or without dancing as a part of the programme.

There are some people who do not dance. A ball does not attract them. And every one understands, of course, that to the elders, labouring as missionaries, dancing is forbidden. However, the elders attend "Gold and Green" dance socials not for dancing, but to enjoy the fine spirit of brotherhood and sociability there prevalent. So enjoyable the social atmosphere may be that everyone can have a good time even though no dancing is indulged in. Those having these affairs in charge undoubtedly keep in mind that the objective is not dancing so much as sociability.

Branch and district socials, experience proves, are excellent means of bringing non-members into contact with the elders, of

giving them a touch of practical religion as it is manifested in the friendly atmosphere of these gatherings, and of showing them that to be a good churchman is to be also a congenial, sympathetic soul and not one set apart from mingling with his fellowmen.

In this connection mention may properly be made of the fact that the spirit of friendship and brotherly love is usually abundantly manifested at our religious services, especially at the close. That it should be so is eminently proper. Where this spirit is given full sway, envy, jealousy, resentment, fault-finding and other forms of ill-will cannot continue to exist. Hence, handshaking at meeting should be encouraged among all our saints. No one can fail to be benefited by attending our meetings who will allow himself to breathe deeply the atmosphere created in a meeting sincerely devoted to a worship of God. But a condition necessary in order so to breathe is at least an open-minded and respectful attitude toward the services and a willingness to see good where good exists, also a desire to respond to the better feelings that arise within. With such an attitude taken by all who attend, the time spent in the moments of the social period at the close of our religious meetings will be most helpful and enjoyable. And so, this period may have a high proselyting value which should never be neglected.

As children of our Heavenly Father—all brothers and sisters therefore—we shall find satisfaction in availing ourselves of the opportunities presented to make contacts with our fellows and cultivate their friendships.—M.

SPECIAL NOTICE

A FEATURE of the February 18th issue of London's *Sunday Dispatch* will be a fair, well-written article about the Church and its beliefs, including a personal message from President Joseph F. Merrill. The press as the maker and educator of public opinion can dispel ignorance and misunderstanding as well as excite prejudice. Let us make good use of this article.

THE M MEN

WOULD you like to belong to an organization that has for one of its central aims the obtaining of all true knowledge? Better than that, would you care to belong to a department of that same organization in which the members themselves elect their own officers, conduct their own programmes, discuss their own problems, plan their own activities, organize their own local contests and do things their own way? And in all these things, do it under the direction of one of the greatest educational organizations the world has—the Y. M. M. I. A.? That is what the M Men do!

M Men work is built on the theory that the members themselves should take the initiative in all that they do, and so it is. True, there is an Adult Supervisor in every M Men class, but his place

is within the group, not on the front row. He should always be present, advising, teaching, directing, but he should not conduct meetings nor lead out in discussions. The M Men themselves do all this. Through simple suggestion and timely advice, the Adult Supervisor sees to it that M. I. A. standards of excellency are held to in all M Men activity.

To-day, world government is one of the most fascinating of problems. Books, papers, journals, and the streets all are full of it.

M Men groups have the privilege of dipping into the science of group government with all its thrilling problems, for each M Men group is a self-governing body. They proceed to organize by drawing up a body of rules—a constitution for their association. Then, they fulfill the conditions therein contained; elect the officials, plan the group activities outlined in their own "Branch M Men Constitution," and become a functioning entity.

Once organized, the group is ready to march on in the quest for true knowledge, seeking by actual experiment. Although all men are eligible to the full membership regardless of religious affiliation, every man must take the M Men Pledge; he must pass an examination on the meaning and purpose of the organization, before he can be permitted to wear the M Men pin and bear the title "M Man." Advancement continues. In three or four years time, an active, hard worker may receive the envied title of "Master M Man." By dint of increasing activity, a man thus prepares himself for leadership.

The M Men department is perhaps the most vigorous department of the entire Y. M. M. I. A. Meeting on the regular M. I. A. night, M Men study their lessons and discuss their departmental problems. They join in the activity period the last 45 minutes, for all M Men activity is carried on in harmony with the M. I. A. Activity Programme, and in co-operation with the Community Activity Committee. Then, on the first night of each month, the M Men and Gleaners meet jointly, planning the entire evening as they desire. The General Boards have recognized that perhaps the most vital problem of all to-day is the development of a positive personality. So lessons on "Personality" have been arranged to occupy a part of the time, and to be emphasized on this night. However, month by month, previously, the M Men officers and Gleaner officers meet, and plan a jolly good time for the evening. In the spring of the year, an M Men-Gleaner Banquet provides a thrilling climax to these affairs. Here again is self-government through self-expression!

Good as all this is, the work of an M Man is only just begun when the weekly meeting closes on the Activity Period. In each M Men Class are to be found "specialists," men of the group who will always be on the lookout for outside leisure time things-to-do: Cricket, swimming, bowling, running, jumping, singing, speaking, debating, socials, parties, dinners, informal evenings, and everything else that nice people do well. If the Thirteenth Article of Faith ever carried meaning, it is in an M Men group, for they verily "seek after these things."

In many communities in various parts of the earth, membership in the M Men department of the Y. M. M. I. A. is synonymous with well-won achievement. Begin now the founding of an M Men department. Here is the opportunity to be a real pioneer!—G. HOMER DURHAM.

THE HEARTS OF THE CHILDREN

ELDER JOHN F. COOK

Genealogical Supervisor—Norwich District

BEHOLD, I will reveal unto you the Priesthood by the hand of Elijah the Prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promise made to the fathers; and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers. If it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming. (Quotation of Moroni to Joseph Smith, September 21, 1823.)

The purpose of Elijah's appearance in the Kirtland Temple, in splendid and literal fulfilment of the above-mentioned prophecy, is still vague in the minds of many of the saints. It is only by a very purposeful and humble study of the matter, with the desire to know and understand, in order that we may be right in every phase of the Gospel plan, that we can fully comprehend it. Undoubtedly the Prophet Joseph Smith himself could not fully understand its great purport at the time the revelation was made to him; but it impressed him deeply. In ensuing years, however, the Prophet increased in wisdom and knowledge as link after link of the Gospel chain was revealed, and the keys and powers were bestowed upon him. At length, with the Temple completed at Kirtland, the time came when Elijah indeed appeared, and made known and committed to him the keys of this dispensation in their fulness. Then did the Prophet understand the great work devolving upon the people of this great day and age—the work for their dead. In this, the dispensation of the fulness of times were revealed the saving ordinances whereby the whole human family could merit salvation.

Those who have a testimony of this work can imagine the joy that filled the Prophet's bosom, as the importance of the vicarious work for those who have passed beyond the veil became clear to him. And from that time forward, the necessity of this work has been urged upon all Latter-day Saints.

What then, in brief, was the promise made to the fathers that was to be fulfilled in the latter-days by the turning of the hearts of the children to them? It was the promise of the Lord made through Enoch, Isaiah, and the prophets, to the nations of the earth, that the time should come when the dead should be redeemed. The turning of the hearts of the children is fulfilled in the performing of vicarious temple work, and in the preparation for genealogies.

As soon as the Priesthood embracing these keys was restored, the hearts of the children commenced turning towards their fathers, to those of their ancestors who had passed to the spirit world without a knowledge of the Gospel. Since the date of Elijah's visit to the Kirtland Temple, April 1836, the peoples of the earth have been moved upon by the Spirit of Elijah to seek out genealogies of the many families to which they are related. The government of this country in the year following 1836, was moved upon to pass the Registration Act, making it compulsory to keep proper records of births, marriages and deaths. Legislation required that a copy of such things should be kept in essential detail, at Somerset House, in London. The effect of

this has been far-reaching; it has planted in the hearts of learned men and women a desire to search after and delve into other records of their progenitors. Some records, mislaid or lost for centuries prior to the last century, the existence of which were never suspected, are coming to light. Many societies and institutions of the outside world are devoting their time and means to the uncovering and building up of genealogies and pedigrees. What are we Latter-day Saints, who have most to gain by this work, doing toward its promulgation?

The Church is doing its part. It has built up a fine organization for the purpose of helping us with the work for our dead. There are Genealogical Sections to teach us the things we need to know, both of the doctrinal and the practical side of the work in nearly every branch of the mission. At one time it was difficult for the saints out in the mission field to get vicarious work performed for them in the Temples. But now that obstacle has vanished. Offers have come from the Stakes of Zion to do work for thousands of our dead, if we will but do our part and search out the genealogies needed.

Are we doing our part? Many are. Incident upon incident could be quoted of the spirit of Elijah helping those saints who first of all merit that help by doing their part toward uncovering the lines of the ancestors. Just one incident will suffice. There is a humble sister in one of the London branches, who, reading in her patriarchal blessing that friends would be raised up to help her obtain information concerning her genealogy, did not sit down to wait for that help to come to her in some undefined mysterious manner. She immediately set to work to do her part by getting into contact with somebody who could help her. And what blessings have followed her efforts! The question of finance—where to find the money necessary to pay the fees for the information she needed—proved to be an obstacle, but not one she could not overcome. She is a working woman, with just a working woman's income; but she at once set to work to earn more money by doing such humble tasks as making and selling jams and preserves, and taking in washing, in order to get the amount required for the work. And the result? She has recently sent almost five hundred names through the mission office, to have the work done for them in the Temple of the Lord. Is that Sister happy? She most certainly is!

Now then, brothers and sisters in the British Mission: God has done His part by giving us the privilege of knowing this Gospel plan. His Son Jesus Christ gave His life, that we might have eternal life. The Prophet Joseph Smith sealed his testimony of this work with his blood. The Church at the present day is doing its part by making the way clear for us to have the saving ordinances for our dead performed in the Temples free of all cost. The mission authorities are doing their part, by providing us with such fine lesson books and with all the instructions we need. The genealogical section officers are doing their part by endeavouring to give us an understanding of this great and necessary work. Are we doing our part by showing the interest and activity which alone will make us worthy participants of the spirit of Elijah that we may be even as saviours on Mount Zion for our dead? The answer, and its result rests entirely with us. Let us not shirk this responsibility and duty of Love!

THE EXPANSION OF GENEALOGICAL WORK

ON November 13, 1894, in the old Church Historian's Office, not far from the Temple block in Salt Lake City, the Genealogical Society of Utah was organized. There the documents were drawn up that started this remarkably fast-growing organization on its mission of universal salvation. Thirteen men, including President Wilford Woodruff, under the direction of the first president of the Society, Church Historian Franklin D. Richards, leaders of the Church of that day, were present and signed the papers of association. Here the first meetings were held. Recording, and all work was carried on from these quarters until the completion, in 1916, of the new Church Office building, in which the Society found a new home.

In 1895 there were but 25 Life Members and 23 Annual Members of the Society. The library contained but a single hundred volumes. Thirty years later, in 1925, there were 3,958 Life Members and more than 8,000 books in the library. More space was needed for the expanding organization. And now, in 1934, after residing in two other homes, the Genealogical Society is housed in its own large, well-appointed building.

On January 17, 1934, was held the formal opening of the Joseph F. Smith Memorial Building as the Society's headquarters. The Smith Memorial Building was built in 1917 for the Latter-day Saint University campus group. It is the largest and newest of the group, four stories high, the top floor of which consists of a large auditorium. Here are commodious accommodations for lectures, classwork, reading rooms, and space to house the 16,000 volume library. The Genealogical Society will have ample room for the future growth.

These events mark the steps in the establishment of one of the greatest libraries of its kind and scope in the entire United States, which fact points to the consideration of greater, and more important facts to us here in England.

At our very doors are the world's treasure houses of genealogical investigation! Somerset House, British Museum, the Guildhall of London, Dublin's Public Record Office, the Manchester Library, Register House at Edinburgh, and the rest—to say nothing of the parish registers and town records one finds on every hand—are within easy access of the majority of us. Surely our opportunities here to help fulfill the Lord's wonderful purposes are vast. And with the establishment of the new library at Salt Lake City to house future finds, we who are in close proximity with these great storehouses should be spurred on to increased activity, that all may benefit.

The Genealogical Society was founded for purposes stated as benevolent, educational, and religious; benevolent, in that it has in forty years' time gathered a library of 16,000 volumes, a modest Church storehouse for the benefit of all; educational, in that it has always, and is increasingly so at the present time, disseminating correct information on matters genealogical; religious, in that it acquires the necessary records of the deceased in accord with the principle of Universal Salvation taught by the Restored Church of Christ.

In forty years of hard work and sacrifice, the Utah library has been built up to its present enviable height. Opportunities

there are great, but not so great as are opportunities for those of us who are blessed to live in the British Isles. Ours is every advantage in seeking after our dead, with the added advantage of a service that is within our power to render others of our fellow-seekers throughout the world—that of making available to their use, the resources at our disposal. Priceless blessings follow such splendid service.

During 1934, Genealogical Classes throughout the British Mission will meet twice each month to learn better methods of researching the vast fields at our disposal; how to find out our own genealogy, and how to properly record the results of such intelligent research. The Mission Supervisor of Genealogy has prepared a splendid handbook-text to aid in these purposes. All interested should have one.

Members of the Church in the British Isles, let us take our signal from the marvelous growth of the Genealogical work throughout the world in the past few decades. Let us duplicate the achievement of the establishing of the new Library and Office in Salt Lake City by commencing now, a similar, greater growth of genealogical societies in the British Mission.

President John A. Widtsoe has said: "If you want power, help the dead! For love begets love—Eternal law!" May we strive to thus serve.—G. HOMER DURHAM.

FROM THE MISSION FIELD

Departures: Elders Jodie J. Smith, Elliot D. Ward, and Raphael C. Palfreyman, whose releases were announced in a recent issue of the *Star*, will return to America aboard the s.s. *Manhattan*, sailing February 15th. Elders Smith and Ward will embark at Havre; Elder Palfreyman, at Southampton.

Doings in the Districts: Manchester—Members of the Rochdale M. I. A. furnished the entire programme for the regular joint M.I.A. meeting of the Oldham Branch on Sunday, February 4th. Brothers A. Fitton and G. Dale discussed the subject, "God and War."

Local missionaries of the Oldham Branch had a sweeping good time at a "Cobweb Social" held Saturday, January 27th. An unusually well prepared programme of musical numbers and readings during the first part of the evening put them in fine fettle for the activities of the second part. Standing on chairs and tables, and armed with brooms, brushes and dustcloths, they spent the remainder of the

evening clearing away the maize of string cobwebs that covered the ceiling of the Branch rooms. Chief-sweeper was Brother John Massey, who conceived and conducted the novel evening's entertainment.

Bristol—Penzance Branch, the newest addition to the branches of the Bristol District, entertained its Bee-Hive girls at a social on Friday, January 26th. Sister Augusta Edwards planned the evening's entertainment. Guests numbered forty.

Birmingham—Nuneaton Branch won the majority of the Auxiliary Banners awarded for general auxiliary efficiency in the District during the past season. Presentation was made at the last Regular Union Meeting held January 27th. To Nuneaton went the Sunday School, Relief Society, Genealogical Society and M. I. A. Banners. Dndley Port won the Primary Banner; Handsworth Branch the Bee-Hive Banner.

London—The Athenæum Ball Room, with its vaulted Gothic ceil-

ing, its rich crystal chandeliers, and its sumptuous, thick-carpeted salon adjoining, provided a picturesque setting for London District's first Gold and Green Ball, held Friday, January 28th. And from the first warm greetings of the Branches' M. I. A. officials, headed by District Supervisor James K. Hill, to the last lingering good-night, saints and friends enjoyed the pervading sense of splendid sociability that characterized London M. I. A.'s loveliest party. Even those who did not join in the dancing felt happy that they had come, and that it was good to be there among their friends.

The feature of the Ball was a presentation of the Gold and Green Fox-trot, danced by John and Winifred Bulloch, and Nettie Woodbury and Elmer R. Longson. And then, in delightful contrast to the modern tempo and rhythm of the M. I. A. dance, President and Sister James H. Douglas gave a charming demonstration of an old-fashioned dance, "The Varsenvienne." The stately grace and exquisite daintiness of two dancers, as they moved smoothly and lightly over the floor, brought a never-to-be-forgotten thrill to the admiring onlookers.

Delicious and tasteful was the buffet supper that was served during the intermission in the gold and green decorated salon. There friends met friends at the small tables in front of the huge fireplace, and enjoyed a social time together. Everywhere was a spirit of gaily and effervescent geniality. Many of the guests who had never met with the saints before spoke of the unusually good time they were enjoying, and asked when and where they might come to just such a gathering again.

James K. Hill was in charge of the general arrangements of the evening and Sister Alice Lewis, Y. L. M. I. A. Supervisor, planned and arranged the refreshments, and supervised their serving. Assisting them were the Branch M. I. A. Officers, and the district elders under the direction of President Bart L. Christenson. Andre K. Anastaciou conducted the evening's activities as Master of Ceremonies.

Patrons of the affair were President and Sister Joseph F. Merrill,

President and Sister James H. Douglas, and the London District Branch Presidents and their wives. Dancers and onlookers numbered more than two hundred.

M. I. A. members of the St. Albans Branch were the hosts at a well-planned Gold and Green Social held in the branch hall on January 31st. A programme of songs, readings and sketches revealed an abundance of talent among the local members, and refreshments served during the intermission were unusually fine. The remainder of the evening was devoted to games and dancing. Brother Ernest Osborne and Sister Elsie Osborne, Branch Y. M. and Y. L. M. I. A. Presidents were in charge of the arrangements. Branch President William J. Jolliffe directed the programme. Guests, including many saints and friends from London and neighbouring branches, numbered forty.

West London Branch, on January 10th, gathered its Primary and Sunday School children for a social afternoon. At the conclusion of the afternoon's games and entertainment, Elder Elmer R. Longson, District Auxiliary Supervisor, presented prize books to several young Sunday School members who had the most outstanding records of attendance and behaviour during the past year. Sixty-five happy, vivacious youngsters, most of whom are not members of the Church, enjoyed the afternoon's achievements. Sisters McCormick, Anastaciou, Starbuck, Abel and Metcalf were in charge of the arrangements.

The Letchworth Branch Christmas party, held on January 4th, though late in season, was none the less merry and gay. Most of the programme was presented by the children of the Branch, who delighted their audience with well prepared recitations and songs. Games and refreshments completed the evening's activities. Father Christmas helped Brother Frank Armstrong, who was in charge of the entertainment, to make the affair a long-to-be-remembered one by distributing gifts to each one of the little tots present.

Sheffield—A profusion of Green

and Gold decorations transformed the Sheffield Branch Hall into a lovely setting for the District Gold and Green Ball, held January 27th. And a merry throng of dancers, moving to the rhythmic music of a splendid dance orchestra gave to that setting the touch of wholesome carefree gaiety that characterizes all Mutual Improvement Association social functions. Sheffield has seen many Green and Gold Balls, but few more lovely than this.

Queen of the evening's delightful activities was Olive Snow, of the Rawmarsh Branch. Sister Snow presided over her gay subjects with dignity and grace. During the evening three dancing couples demonstrated the Gold and Green Fox-trot. To the tuneful music specially written for the dance, Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Parnham of Rawmarsh, Lillian Clark and Peter Hamstead of Rawmarsh, and Rita Hardy and Herbert Bailey of Sheffield, presented a charming picture of grace and rhythm.

A late supper, planned and supplied by the Rawmarsh and Sheffield Branches, was served during the intermission, under the direction of the Relief Society sisters. Delicious sandwiches, pastries and chocolate found ready buyers.

Arrangements for the ball were made by M. I. A. officers of the various branches, under the leadership of District Auxiliary Supervisor Lillian Clark. Rose Bailey

conducted the sale of the tickets. One hundred and fifty were in attendance, of whom many were friends and investigators.

Ulster—On December 22nd, the Belfast Branch Sunday School presented a concert and entertainment in the branch hall. Approximately eighty people enjoyed the festivities of the evening.

On Christmas Day, the Sunday School and Primary children of the Belfast Branch were entertained at a children's social. Each of the twenty-five children in attendance were given a Christmas toy to add to their enjoyment of the holiday season.

Personals: To Brother and Sister William J. Dyson of the Sparkbrook Branch, Birmingham District was born a daughter, December 28th.

Successfully recovering from a major operation performed February 2nd, is Brother Percy Bonzer of the Oldham Branch. He expects to leave the Oldham Royal infirmary soon, and after a period of convalescing, to be once more active in the affairs of the Oldham Branch.

In St. Mary's Hospital in London, Elder Elmer R. Longson is undergoing treatment for the relief of complications that have set in as a result of a previous operation for appendicitis. It is hoped that he will soon be able to continue his work in the London District.

DEATH

JAMES—Alexander James, husband of Sister Euphemia James of the Glasgow Branch died on January 24th, in the Glasgow Western Infirmary. Mr. James has been a

kind friend to the members and missionaries of the Church, and his loss will be keenly felt by Glasgow Branch members.

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